

CLAIMS

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. An apparatus, comprising:
 - (a) a column normally generally vertical when a device of which said column is a part is in an operating position; and
 - (b) a platform operatively connected at one end to said column and normally generally horizontal when said device is in an operating position, said platform being selectively raised or lowered to raise or lower a load placed on said platform.
2. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 1, wherein: said device can be folded with said column and said platform generally parallel, so that said device can be transported or stored.
3. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 2, wherein: said device includes a brake mechanism that can be activated when said device is folded.
4. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 1, wherein: a proximal end of said platform engages a lead screw disposed within said column.
5. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 4, wherein: said lead screw is rotated by an electric motor, said electric motor receiving power from a source internal to said device.

6. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 1, wherein: a chassis attached to a lower end of said column underlies said platform and rests on a surface upon which said device is disposed.

7. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 6 wherein: said device has first wheels disposed at a lower end of said column and pads and/or second wheels disposed at a distal end of said chassis.

8. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 2, further comprising: a handle attached to said column to aid in carrying said device when said device is in its folded position.

9. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 1, further comprising: tie down straps connected to sides of said platform to secure said load.

10. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 9, wherein: said tie down straps can be selectively positioned along said side of said platform.

11. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 1, wherein: said platform can be selectively manually lengthened or shortened.

12. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 1, further comprising: an upper ball foot disposed at an upper end of said column that engages a surface on which said device is placed when said column is horizontal.

13. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 1, further comprising: arms extending generally horizontally from said column to stabilize said load.

14. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 13, further comprising: at least one strap extending from at least one of said arms to stabilize said load.

15. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 1, further comprising: a crane structure extending from said column.

16. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 7, wherein: at least one of said first wheels is driven by a motor.

17. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 7, wherein each of said second wheels comprises:

(a) a vertical circular wheel disposed on a horizontal shaft disposed between a generally horizontal upper portion and a generally horizontal lower portion of an extension of said chassis;

(b) said horizontal shaft disposed operatively connected to a horizontal plate disposed above said horizontal shaft; and

(c) said horizontal plate being disposed at approximately said upper portion and engaging generally horizontal ball bearings disposed beneath a plate fixedly connected to said upper portion.

18. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 7, wherein: each of said second wheels comprises at least two configurations manually selectable by rotation of said second wheels.

19. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 7, wherein: each of said first wheels has as relatively soft circular removable covering placed thereabout to assist said first wheels in maneuvering across soft terrain.

20. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 19, wherein: said relatively soft circular removable covering is filled with a foam material.

21. An apparatus, as defined in Claim 1, wherein: said platform is configured to hold thereon a toolbox, a chest of drawers, a seat of a vehicle, a circular container, or an object in a vise disposed at an edge of said platform.